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23 April 1963

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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE BULLETIN



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South Vietnam: The Viet Cong launched a number of attacks last week in the coastal areas of Quang Ngai Province, about 300 miles north of Saigon.

The attacks apparently were a reaction to progress that government forces have been making in pacifying the province. They may also have been the Viet Cong's response to Diem's amnesty appeal, which coincided with the first anniversary of the strategic hamlets program.

Although the Communists suffered considerable losses, they probably hope the effect of this show of strength will be to undermine popular confidence in strategic hamlets and to divert government troops from extending clear-and-hold operations westward into a major Viet Cong stronghold.

An estimated five Viet Cong companies and four platoons were involved in the various actions, which included attacks on strategic hamlets, bridges, and outposts, and a grenade assault on the headquarters of the South Vietnam 25th Division--the only division committed almost entirely to clear-and-hold operations.

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DAILY BRIEF

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Rumania: There is significant disagreement between Rumania and the USSR over the role Rumania is to play in the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance (CEMA).

[REDACTED]
Bucharest is refusing to accept a CEMA decision that Rumania abandon plans for most major new industries and concentrate instead on petroleum products, fertilizers, and agriculture.

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A specific Rumanian grievance is Soviet reluctance to grant sufficient aid for the large Galati iron and steel combine. Rumania has received some aid from West European countries for this project. It is currently seeking substantially more.

The Rumanian stand has been approved by a plenum of the central committee of the Rumanian Communist Party. Following this plenum, a series of regional party rallies was called to endorse the party's position.

Word of the party's action has leaked out, according to the US Legation, and the regime's stand has wide popular support. Although the dispute has apparently not affected Bucharest's basic political and ideological loyalty to Moscow, the Rumanian regime will find it difficult to reverse its position in the event of further Soviet pressure. [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

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NOTES

Cuba-Algeria-USSR: Premier Ben Bella announced on 21 April that Fidel Castro will visit Algeria next month. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] Castro was planning his Algerian visit in connection with a trip to Moscow in May. [REDACTED]

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USSR: Two large naval missiles, similar to the one first shown in a Moscow parade on 7 November last year, were seen on 20 April in a rehearsal for the Moscow May Day parade. Their appearance suggests that the USSR is continuing to develop this weapon. The missile is believed to have a range of at least 600 n.m. and probably can, as claimed in Soviet press reports, be launched from underwater. [REDACTED]

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DAILY BRIEF

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Bolivia: President Victor Paz Estenssoro has decided to postpone the visit he was to have made to the US next month. Vice President Juan Lechin's return from Rome has muddled the political atmosphere and President Paz fears that a two-week absence from the capital would enable Lechin, as acting President, to consolidate his followers in opposition to Paz. He is also apprehensive that Lechin may also win over certain segments of the military which hitherto have been loyal to him. [REDACTED]

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Peru: Army regional commanders [REDACTED]

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[REDACTED] The regional commanders have more direct control over troops than does the junta and are believed to have played an influential role in bringing about the military coup of July 1962 as well as the ouster of former junta president Perez Godoy last March. [REDACTED]

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 The Special Assistant for National Security Affairs
 The Scientific Adviser to the President
 The Director of the Budget
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 The Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs
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 The Secretary of the Navy
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 The Assistant Secretary of Defense
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